

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMON COUNCIL  
OF THE CITY OF PLATTSBURGH, NEW YORK**

January 7, 2010

**5:30 P.M.**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Mayor Donald Kasprzak, Councilors Tim Carpenter (W1), Michael Kelly (W2), George Rabideau (W3), Jim Calnon (W4), Amy Valentine (W5), Chris Jackson (W6)

**Absent:** None

\*\*\*\*\*

**1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:**

**RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the regular meeting of the Common Council held on December 29, 2009 are approved and placed on file among the public records of the City Clerk's Office.

By Councilor Kelly; Seconded by Councilor Carpenter

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Kelly, Rabideau, Calnon, Valentine, Jackson

(All voted in the affirmative)

\*\*\*\*\*

**2. PAYROLLS OF VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS:**

**RESOLVED:** That the payrolls of the various Departments of the City of Plattsburgh for the week ending January 6, 2010 in the amount of \$ 271,439.12 are authorized and allowed and the Mayor and the City Clerk are hereby empowered and directed to sign warrants drawn on the City Chamberlain for the payment thereof.

By Councilor Jackson; Seconded by Calnon

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Kelly, Rabideau, Calnon, Valentine, Jackson

(All voted in the affirmative)

\*\*\*\*\*

**3. REPORTS OF CITY OFFICES & COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- Report of Fire and Ambulance Responses for the week of December 29, 2009 – January 6, 2010
- Report from the Building Inspector's Office from January 4, 2010

**RESOLVED:** That the reports as read are hereby ordered, received and placed on file among the public records of the City Clerk's Office.

By Councilor Valentine; Seconded by Councilor Rabideau

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Kelly, Rabideau, Calnon, Valentine, Jackson

(All voted in the affirmative)

\*\*\*\*\*

**4 CORRESPONDENCE & RECOMMENDATIONS FROM BOARDS: None**

\*\*\*\*\*

**5. AUDIT OF CLAIMS:**

**RESOLVED:** That the bills approved by the Auditing Committee of the Common Council in the amount of \$ 636,828.54 are authorized and allowed and the Mayor and City Clerk (where

required) are hereby authorized and directed to sign warrants drawn on the City Chamberlain for the payment thereof.

By Councilor Calnon; Seconded by Councilor Jackson

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Kelly, Rabideau, Calnon, Valentine, Jackson

(All voted in the affirmative)

\*\*\*\*\*

## **6. PERSONS ADDRESSING COUNCIL:**

**Dave Bezio** 53 Dickson Point Road spoke as an employee not as President of IBEW union. He spoke about the two motions regarding management raises. He feels all those managers should have to pay for their health insurance. He indicated there are 4 unions without contracts and he states with almost 100 % certainty that if they offered these unions \$1500 raises and told them they get to keep their free health care that they would have 4 contracts. He finds it amazing that this group discussed raises and didn't put the part that is so important to saving the city taxpayers taxes and keep this health insurance under control. He states the managers are the leaders of these departments and should have been the first ones to the table to pay for healthcare. He listed several managers' salaries and stated that they are the ones who can afford to pay \$2,000 to \$3,000 dollars (\$60 per week) for health insurance. He said some of them do but some of them don't. He stated that the Mayor didn't give them a choice to say at IBEW your guys that pay for health insurance will get a raise and those guys who don't pay for health insurance won't get one. Why are the groups of workers who make \$30,000, \$40,000, \$50,000 treated differently than those who make \$70,000, \$80,000, \$90,000 and over \$100,000 in this city? That is a real problem and sends a very poor message to all those employees of this city. He said there is an election coming and all the councilors have to face the retirees that didn't get raises in their social security. He listened to **Councilor Calnon** talk about unemployment and every 2 weeks he gets letters from the Mayor about how bad it is in this country and how people are giving up and paying for health care. But this council thought it was grand to give away \$1,500 without anything attached. He is telling them they need to seriously think about this tonight. He hopes they all do the right thing. He said some of them are going to run for office again some may not but they have to face their constituents and explain to them why the guy in the garbage truck making \$29,000 has to pay for his health care and the guy making \$100,000 doesn't.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **7. OTHER ITEMS:**

**A. RESOLVED:** In accordance with the request therefore the Common Council approves Request from the Environmental Manager Jonathan Ruff for the Mayor to be authorized to sign Change Order No. 1 to Casella Construction, Inc, "Akey Road Landfill Closure Alternate Bid" in the amount of \$366,450.

By Councilor Valentine; Second by Councilor Jackson

Discussion: None

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Kelly, Rabideau, Calnon, Valentine, Jackson

(All voted in the affirmative)

**ACTION TAKEN:** Adopted

Follow up Action: None

\*\*\*\*\*

**8. TRAVEL REQUEST: None**

\*\*\*\*\*

**9. ADOPTION OF CITY OF PLATTSBURGH 2010 BUDGET**

**A.** Motion confirming identification of Mayor's 2010 Budget.

**Resolved:** The Budget presented by the Mayor to the Common Council for the 2010 Fiscal Year is identified by the heading "Amended Mayor's Budget", is dated September 30, 2009, and is hereinafter referred to as the "2010 Mayor's Budget"; further

**Resolved:** that the 2010 Mayor's Budget will be the City of Plattsburgh's Budget for the 2010 fiscal year unless it is amended by resolution of the Common Council adopted prior to January 15, 2010

By Councilor Calnon; Seconded by Councilor Jackson

Discussion: None

Roll call: Councilor Carpenter, Kelly, Rabideau, Calnon, Valentine, Jackson

(All voted in the affirmative)

**ACTION TAKEN:** Adopted

Follow Up: None

**B.** Motion to Amend the 2010 Mayor's Budget to:

Place contested Medical Arts Building Taxes in reserve.

Reduce State Aid for Assessor's office to zero.

Correct omission of Maintenance Worker I at Longevity Step 2

Approve Recreation Mini Dump Truck with up to three year financing

Approve Recreation Pickup Truck with up to three year financing

Add \$2,000 for new Batteries for the City's Electric Cars

Approve 2 Asset Seizure Police Officer Temporary Positions.

Approve Part-Time Parking Assistant Position, increasing both revenue and expense accounts appropriately.

Use \$350,500 Retirement Reserve to offset 2010 Retirement Payment

By Councilor Valentine; Seconded by Councilor Carpenter

Discussion: None

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Kelly, Rabideau, Calnon, Valentine, Jackson

(All voted in the affirmative)

**ACTION TAKEN:** Adopted

Follow Up: None

**C.** Motion to separate the following resolution **C** in to two separate motions:

Motion to Amend the 2010 Mayor's Budget to:

Add \$10,320 to the Library Budget to allow creation of a new Librarian Position for upgrade of a current employee, without backfill of current position, and to add \$15,000 to Library Budget to allow for Sunday Hours.

By Councilor Carpenter; Seconded by Councilor Calnon

Discussion:

**Councilor Calnon** stated he would be voting against the entire motion not because he objects to rewarding an employee for increasing their level of education and qualifications we normally should encourage that but he is sensitive to the fact that we could be sending the library board a message that contrary to what he thinks is important for them. He supports adding \$15,000 to Library budget to offer Sunday hours because he believes that this Library and other Libraries around the country are seeing an increase demand for their standard services in a large part due to the economy. He thinks making those standard services available to them more often with some more hours is good for our citizens and our taxpayers. He prefers not to do the Librarian upgrade at this point.

**Councilor Carpenter** would like to break the motion apart and have two separate motions so they can be voted on separately.

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Kelly, Rabideau, Calnon, Valentine, Jackson  
(All voted in the affirmative)

**ACTION TAKEN:** Adopted

Follow Up: None

Motion to Amend the 2010 Mayor's Budget to:

Add \$10,320 to the Library Budget to allow creation of a new Librarian Position for upgrade of a current employee, without backfill of current position.

By Councilor Carpenter; Seconded by Councilor Kelly

Discussion: None

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Kelly, Rabideau, Calnon, Valentine, Jackson

(Councilors Carpenter, Kelly, Valentine, Jackson voted in the affirmative. Councilors Rabideau and Calnon voted in the negative)

**ACTION TAKEN:** Adopted

Follow Up: None

Motion to Amend the 2010 Mayor's Budget to:

Add \$15,000 to Library Budget to allow for Sunday Hours.

By Councilor Carpenter; Seconded by Councilor Kelly

Discussion: None

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Kelly, Rabideau, Calnon, Valentine, Jackson

(All voted in the affirmative)

**ACTION TAKEN:** Adopted

Follow Up: None

**F. Motion to Amend the 2010 Mayor's Budget to:**

Add \$7,500 for TAC proposal for Community Development for 6 months.

By Councilor Valentine; Seconded by Councilor Carpenter

Discussion: None

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Kelly, Rabideau, Calnon, Valentine, Jackson

(All voted in the affirmative)

**ACTION TAKEN:** Adopted

Follow Up: None

**G. Motion to Amend the 2010 Mayor's Budget to:**

Add \$5,000 for Website Management

By Councilor Calnon; Seconded by Councilor Jackson

Discussion: None

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Kelly, Rabideau, Calnon, Valentine, Jackson

(All voted in the affirmative)

**ACTION TAKEN:** Adopted

Follow Up: None

**H. Motion to Amend the 2010 Mayor's Budget to:**

Increase Debt Service budget by \$35,000.

By Councilor Jackson; Seconded by Councilor Carpenter

Discussion: None

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Kelly, Rabideau, Calnon, Valentine, Jackson

(All voted in the affirmative)

**ACTION TAKEN:** Adopted

Follow Up: None

**I. Motion to Amend the 2010 Mayor's Budget to:**

Add \$25,629 to various departments for Telephone Maintenance Agreement.

By Councilor Calnon; Seconded by Councilor Kelly

Discussion: None

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Kelly, Rabideau, Calnon, Valentine, Jackson

(All voted in the affirmative)

**ACTION TAKEN:** Adopted  
**Follow Up:** None

**J. Motion to Amend the 2010 Mayor's Budget to:**

Add \$3,200 to Police Department for middle management raise.

By Councilor Calnon; Seconded by Councilor Carpenter

Discussion:

**Councilor Carpenter** asked is the \$3,200 for just this year or will it continue each work.

**Councilor Calnon** stated voting for this merely puts money in the budget to allow a later visitation of what the salary should be.

**Councilor Kelly** stated if the intention is to keep that level of pay for that person then it would have to be included in next years budget.

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Kelly, Rabideau, Calnon, Valentine, Jackson

(All voted in the affirmative)

**ACTION TAKEN:** Adopted  
**Follow Up:** None

**K. Motion to Amend the 2010 Mayor's Budget to:**

Increase management salary schedule by \$1,500.

By Councilor Jackson; Seconded by Councilor Carpenter

Discussion:

**Councilor Carpenter** why are we not doing a percentage as opposed to a straight monetary thing.

**Councilor Calnon** said that the Mayor's budget contained a stipend this motion would be a raise in salary schedule.

**Councilor Carpenter** said the Mayor's stipend would disappear and we are actually going to raise their salary by \$1,500 so it doesn't have to be revisited year after year.

**Councilor Calnon** said right. In answer to **Councilor Carpenter's** other question about the percentage. Folks are on the lower end of any salary schedule prefer the dollar figure while folks on the higher end prefer the percentage in general mixing them tends to be the most fair way to do things. He did note that for example the longevity amounts that folks receive is based on a percentage it is 2% of whatever that base salary is this is a dollar figure. In past years it has been a percentage; it is really just a matter of distributing the higher benefit and the lower benefit. The reason is that it is born this way is initially **Councilor Jackson** moved to amend the Mayor's amount which was a fixed dollar amount so that it why it appears as a fixed dollar amount.

**Councilor Carpenter** just wanted to say that he believes strongly in maintaining separation and that is the reason he asked the question. He wants to maintain the separation and he will go along with it.

**Councilor Kelly** wants to reiterate again this year that our management team gets raises. They get longevity increases and step increases so they actually get raises. He said times are tough now and he can't support this. He might have supported the Mayor's original proposal for \$1250 but when it got bumped to \$1,500 he said it is too much. This is not a good time for anyone to get a raise especially

on the backs of taxpayers so he will be voting against this.

**Councilor Valentine** her sentiments are the same as **Councilor Kelly's**.

**Councilor Calnon** stated for clarity purposes since what we do is amend the Mayor's budget. If this fails then the fall back position is what the Mayor has in his budget which is the \$1250 stipend.

**Mayor Kasprzak** stated for the record he was not privy to the apparent email they all received from a department head discussing percentage raises.

**Councilor Kelly** asked if he could educate the Mayor on the email. **Mayor Kasprzak** said yes.

**Councilor Kelly** the email suggested which he thought was a good suggestion actually, that this should be based on a percentage of increase so that if you are making \$50,000 it would be a smaller increase than a person making \$75,000. He doesn't think it is a bad idea.

**Councilor Valentine** said if it were based on performance possibly but, all of our managers equally work hard and if they were going to be rewarded they should all be rewarded the same amount and whether you are a new manager making less of a salary versus someone who has been here for many years making higher salary doesn't mean that you work differently they all work hard. She kind of likes this flat rate distributed.

**Councilor Carpenter** said if it is voted no it becomes a stipend of \$1250 as opposed to an actual raise.

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Kelly, Rabideau, Calnon, Valentine, Jackson

(Councilors Carpenter, Rabideau, Kelly and Valentine voted in the negative. Councilors Calnon and Jackson voted in the affirmative)

**ACTION TAKEN:** Defeated

Follow Up: None

**L. Motion to Amend the 2010 Mayor's Budget to:**

Increase Contingency to \$350,000.

By Councilor Jackson; Seconded by Councilor Kelly

Discussion: None

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Kelly, Rabideau, Calnon, Valentine, Jackson

(All voted in the affirmative)

**ACTION TAKEN:** Adopted

Follow Up: None

**M. Motion to Amend the 2010 Mayor's Budget to:**

Use up to \$1,254,698 of 2009 fund unappropriated balance to maintain tax rate at \$10.20/\$1000.

By Councilor Calnon; Seconded by Councilor Jackson

Discussion:

**Councilor Calnon** thinks this is a pretty responsible budget. There are some things here that are modest increases in some things and he thinks they have done a good job of managing it and he says the Council that served before this one and which he joined in its last year had a very difficult budget

year and they set a tax rate that year of \$10.21/\$1,000 and we went down a little bit the following year went back up after that and now this is the fourth year we will be at or below \$10.21/\$1,000. He is proud of that and we all should be proud of that. He asked City Chamberlain Richard Marks if the motions voted on tonight will affect his resolution for the levy Warrant. City Chamberlain Richard Marks stated yes he would have to change the numbers on the resolution.

**Corporation Council John Clute** said we should vote on it next week.

**Mayor Kasprzak** said we need to clarify if we are going to vote on it under new business or wait until next week.

**Corporation Council John Clute** because City Chamberlain Richard Marks needs to change the numbers it should be voted on next week.

**Councilor Calnon** asked if this motion on the table to use up to \$1,254,698 is appropriate to use. City Chamberlain Richard Marks said yes because it is up to.

**Councilor Jackson** said the budget isn't just thought about from late August until this time of year. I am sure we will be talking about the 2011 budget within the next week. This Council since the adoption of the 2009 budget they no longer budget in the Saranac Power payment it used to be \$850,000 which would equate to a 10% increase in taxes. 1% rate equals \$85,000. The difference in the payment of the NYS Retirement system in 2009 versus 2010 is \$ 750,000. That would have been an additional 8.8% increase in the tax rate. Upon recommendation of the NYS Comptroller's office since 2008 we have reduced the contributions from the water and sewer fund to the general fund by \$425,000 that would have been another 5% increase to the tax rate. The 2007 ending general fund balance was 1.7 million dollars the projected 2009 ending general fund balance is 3.2 million dollars. We will be using \$1.254 million of the general fund to stabilize the rate it leaves unappropriated fund balance of about 1.9 to 2 million dollars which basically falls in the high end of the line for the recommendation from the NYS Comptroller's office which is 5 to 10% of your total general fund budget. This Council stabilized water and sewer funds as well as capital reserve funds. Everything there is very stable. The MLD budget has had its first full rate increase since 2003. The rate increase is a total of 4.95% that will be spread across the different rate classes by a formula determined by the public service commission. In 2006 there was a mini rate increase of 1.8% but if you add together the 1.8% and 4.95% it comes up to 6.75% or less than 1% a year since 2006 or over the last 7 years. All this stuff that we have done has been with little if any reduction in services in the City of Plattsburgh. He agrees with **Councilor Calnon** that they should be very proud of what they have been able to do over the last couple of years and that they are planning for the future.

**Councilor Calnon** said that is not the 7 of them who have done all the work. The reason that they have a better fund balance this year is because they had a better than usual health insurance year. The employees and the City both are benefiting from a better management of health care and healthier year for folks we hope that it continues. Our Department Heads have again brought almost all of the budget lines under budget so we have substantial savings in expenses. It really is all 300 of us working together that make a difference. We share the responsibility and the celebration with everyone and it is a good work.

**Councilor Kelly** wanted to mention that our Department Heads participate heavily in the budget process every year and deliver us a good starting point every year and they are to be commended also.

Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Kelly, Rabideau, Calnon, Valentine, Jackson  
(All voted in the affirmative)



**ACTION TAKEN:** Adopted

Follow Up: None

\*\*\*\*\*

**10. RESOLUTIONS FOR INITIAL CONSIDERATION:**

1. Request from the Bill Treacy, Manager MLD to advertise for sealed proposals bid for PMLD BID NO. 2010-1-1 "Fire/Security Alarm proposal." Bid Opening Date: February 16, 2010 at 11:00 am.

\*\*\*\*\*

**11. NEW BUSINESS: None**

\*\*\*\*\*

**12. CLOSING PUBLIC COMMENTS: None**

Motion to Adjourn by Councilor Jackson; Seconded by Councilor Kelly  
Roll call: Councilors Carpenter, Kelly, Rabideau, Calnon, Valentine, Jackson  
(All voted in the affirmative)

**MEETING ADJOURNED:** 6:00 pm